

Washington, D.C. – U.S. Rep. Tom Rooney (FL-16) today highlighted benefits for Florida in legislation passed by the House to extend federal transportation programs, which included a requirement that the Obama Administration issue a permit for the construction of the Keystone Pipeline within 30 days.

“Florida families, businesses and farmers are struggling to make ends meet under skyrocketing gas prices, yet President Obama has repeatedly blocked efforts to expand American energy production,” Rooney said. “Our bill will force the President to act on the Keystone Pipeline, which has cleared every hurdle except his desk. Building the Pipeline is no-brainer – it will create thousands of jobs, improve our national security by reducing our dependence on oil from the Middle East, and help give Floridians some relief at the pump.

The Surface Transportation Extension Act, H.R. 4348, includes a “clean” extension of federal highway and transit programs, as well as the funds used to finance them, ensuring that Florida’s infrastructure projects are not interrupted. The bill also creates a Gulf Coast Restoration Trust Fund to guarantee that fines and settlements related to the April 2010 Deepwater Horizon oil spill will be distributed to Gulf Coast states, including Florida.

“We need to ensure that this money goes to the communities in Florida and along the Gulf Coast that were impacted by the oil spill so that they have the resources necessary to restore their economies and protect their natural resources.

“While I’m frustrated that we’re dealing with a short-term extension instead of a five-year reauthorization of our federal transportation programs, Floridians have a lot to gain in the House bill,” Rooney said.

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